

Chair Philip Isenberg and
Members of the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 9th Street #1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

February 27, 2006

Mr. Isenberg,

I'm very interested in the Marine Life Protection Act process, and I have comments you need to consider when approving the MPA Package. Maximum protection of our coastline is absolutely necessary. Package 2 is by far the best package. In my opinion, even package two is not enough. If you look at the global MPAs, we should be the leaders, not the followers.

I've been a diver in Monterey for more than 30 years. I was a PADI Master Instructor, and I have more than 2500 dives in the Monterey Bay. I've seen the dramatic changes in the fish life over the past 30 years. It concerned me so much in the 1980s I spoke with many "old-timers" who could tell stories of just incredible marine habitats. These habitats no longer exist. They have been overfished, and I am concerned we will never be able to recover to the levels we were at fifty years ago. Think about it...our population keeps growing, and there continues to be more demand for our resources. I want to see full protection for the Edward C Cooper SMR. We need to protect this very small, but incredible area. It would be irresponsible to make that small but valuable portion of our coast anything but a Marine Reserve.

I love to fish. In fact I used to teach Underwater Hunting in the Monterey Bay. There are always places to hunt, so ignore those crybabies who will say you are taking from them their only place they can go. It is time to protect this valuable area. You used to be able to hunt in Yosemite, and that is no longer legal. Make this area a place protected. Trust me they will find somewhere else to hunt and fish. If they need a few tips for spots that are not on the proposed protected list, have them send me a letter, I'll tell them where to go.

Sincerely,

Kurt Wichmann